



**Training Partnerships for Prevention, Protection and Preparedness:  
A Conference to Build Stronger Partnerships On Disaster Response Training**

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## MEETING NOTES FROM DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) ISSUES BREAKOUT

### **Wednesday, April 21**

#### **DOE Issues**

*Moderator: Ted Outwater, NIEHS WETB, and Emma Lopez-Cardona, DOE OBS OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT*

Ted Outwater started out the session by giving a brief overview of the program and introducing Emma Lopez-Cardona, the new Department of Energy (DOE) administrator for the NIEHS/DOE Nuclear Worker Training Program. The session centered on attendees describing the programs they represent.

Don Ellensberger then described The Center to Protect Workers' Rights (CPWR). CPWR, established as a non-profit organization in 1990, was created at the request of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the AFL-CIO. The Center performs two key functions for construction workers: it conducts and publishes research on health and safety issues of importance to construction workers; and it develops and conducts specialized health and safety training for workers at Superfund Sites and at the DOE Nuclear Sites. CPWR's program consists of 3 major components: Research (NIOSH), Training (NIEHS – EPA & DOE) and Medical screening programs (DOE). The CPWR's activities with the DOE consist of training, developing curriculum and training instructors.

Sheila Webster provided an update on the Hazardous Materials Training and Research Institute (HMTRI). HMTRI through the Community and College Consortium for Health and Safety Training (CCCHST) provides health and safety training to workers, contractors, subcontractors and public officials serving DOE facilities. Ms. Webster focused on the work of the Technology Research and Development Program of the Energy, Environment and Resources Center (EERC) at the University of Tennessee. They conduct training at the Oak Ridge National Lab, Y-12 and K-25 Plants, TN as well as at Paduca, KY, and Portsmouth, OH. In addition, the institute, as part of HMTRI's National Mass Fatalities Institute,, helps communities, businesses, industries, government, and disaster-response agencies prepare for, respond to, and recover from catastrophes that result in large loss of life.

Scott Solomon, Director of the Hazardous Materials Training Department, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) then explained his program. IAFF works to determine the specific needs of fire service personnel in and around DOE facilities, conduct appropriate training, and evaluate the results of training. They place great emphasis on their "train the trainer" model thus building the capacity of local DOE sites to continue hazardous materials training on their own. The DOE sites served were Hanford, Savannah River, Oak Ridge, Rocky Flats, Lawrence Livermore, Nevada Test Site, Argonne National Labs, West Valley, Yucca Mountain and Sandia National Laboratories. The union represents over 265,000 fire, rescue and EMS workers in the U.S. and Canada who protect 80% of the U.S. population. The HAZMAT Training Dept. has been involved with the DOE and NIEHS since 1994.

Larry Gregorie from the International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU) Council explained their collaboration with the DOE. His organization works with machinists and other employees who are exposed to a variety of hazards, including radiation, heavy metals, solvents and acid gases through their normal work, as well as due to releases and other incidents. They conduct emergency response training classes and refreshers at such places as HAMMER, Oakridge and Lawrence Livermore. Their approach is to target the knowledge, attitudes and skills of these workers. An important focus of their training is addressing literacy issues. They also conduct pre and post testing of their courses, monitor the quality and training of these courses and have secured outside agencies to evaluate the training.

John Kovatch from the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) discussed the Operating Engineers National HAZMAT Program (OENHP). Their goal is to improve all aspects of safety and health for America's workers and to supply a more productive, profitable and safe workforce. Some of their programs have included: Integrating S&H lessons learned from WTC into Master Instructor Refresher & HAZWOPER Training; The development of Safety and Health issues with CBRN; Outreach to management, engineering groups, subcontractors including the Nevada Test site and; Utilizing DPS system in training development to more rapidly and cost effectively construct and distribute material. Some of their training

programs have included: Refresher training for Master Instructors; 40-hr General Site Worker; 24-hr RCRA TSD Site Worker; Update 8-hr refresher, RAD Worker II & develop 16-24-40 HAZWOPER lesson plans, and; Implementing First aid/CPR unit as needed. Future training will include training at the Oak Ridge, Hanford, INEEL and IUOE facilities.

Mitch Rosen from the University of Medicine and Denistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) and NJ/NY consortium explained what the NJ/NY consortium does. Under the DOE program, center members involved in this program are UMDNJ and the University at Buffalo. The sites targeted are Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, Princeton, NJ; Brookhaven National Laboratories, Upton, NY; and West Valley Demonstration Project, West Valley, NY. He emphasized the importance of the continuity and flexibility of the training provided to the DOE by the program.

Gary Gustafson from the Laborers-AGC explained their involvement. In 1987 they received their initial NIEHS EPA Award. In 1993 they received their initial NIEHS DOE award. Some examples of courses include: HW Site Worker, Radiological Worker I & II, Asbestos Abatement, Hearing Conservation and Hazard Communication. They will soon begin conducting the Training of Federal and Local Law Enforcement Agents in issues related to homeland security.

Herman Potter from the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Worker International Union (PACE) explained his program. PACE represents 320,000 workers in the pulp, paper, automobile parts, appliance manufacturing, cement, kaolin, oil, chemical, nuclear materials and pharmaceutical industries. Other sectors include health care, aviation, natural gas distribution, and mining. It is the fourth largest industrial union. They train workers using the small group method. In addition, trainees apply tasks to make them more relevant to them and thus, more memorable. Actual workers develop the curriculum. This allows them to be more responsive to change. PACE works at six DOE sites: Idaho National Environmental & Engineering Laboratories, Idaho Falls, Idaho; Mound Facility, Miamisburg, Ohio, and; K-25 Facility, Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Paducah Uranium Enrichment Facility, Paducah, Kentucky; Portsmouth Uranium Enrichment Facility, Piketon, Ohio; Hanford Site, Richland, Washington.

Patricia Aldridge from Fluor Hanford, Inc. explained the HAMMER program. HAMMER, Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response, is a hands-on training facility located in Richland, Washington, near the DOE Hanford complex. It is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy and operated by Fluor Hanford, Inc. There were more than 26,000 student days of training given between October 2003 and March 2004 for workers in high-risk jobs such as nuclear site personnel, first and second responders, and hazardous waste workers. The program emphasizes the "worker as trainer" approach.

After the presentations, the group held a comment/Q&A session.

The comments included:

- ✦ The programs are receiving positive evaluations.
- ✦ That one thing that affects the promises and agreements they can make with trainees is the fact that they don't find out about funding and don't get the money until the very last minute.
- ✦ Emma Lopez-Cardona stated that she "sees the value in these programs." She also said that she wants to speak to each person individually and she saw no possibility of increased funding in the immediate future. Responding to one final question, Lopez-Cardona stated that "the best way you can help me become your advocate is to let me know what issues you are facing that you need help solving."